
The Hamas–Fatah Conflict: Shallow but Wide

NATHAN J. BROWN

International attention to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict tends to highlight major diplomatic initiatives and dramatic events while neglecting concrete developments, subtle trends, and grinding practical realities. Emphasis on the “peace process” has created an illusion that the two identifiable antagonists could come to a clear agreement on a two–state solution. But the widening division in the Palestinian ranks—between Hamas and Fatah, and between the West Bank and Gaza—remains unaddressed.

The international community, and particularly Israel, seems to hope that punishing economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation will simply make Hamas disappear and render Gaza more pliable or even irrelevant. The Palestinian division, however, prevents the Palestinians from speaking with one voice, much less acting in a coherent manner. This rift would vitiate any diplomatic breakthrough that might occur between Israel and the Palestinians in resolving, or even managing, the conflict.

When Hamas and Fatah fought their brief but bitter civil war in June 2007, the outcome was short of Solomonic: the object of contention, the Palestinian Authority (PA), was actually split in two. The grim reality is that the Palestinians now have two political systems that are moving further away from each other, and neither seems to have a viable strategy for realizing its vision or building a better future for the people it purports to lead.

International diplomatic initiatives have proved ephemeral and dismissive of the widening chasm, which is profoundly distressing to most

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Palestinians. Bowing to public opinion, the two PAs have denied that the schism is a natural state of affairs and have dutifully reported to various reconciliation summons. But those efforts, now spearheaded by Egypt, appear to have run out of steam. Other attempts by the international community to help—led by the United States—have entrenched the division even more, alternately by neglect and by design.

Palestinian politics is littered with makeshift, temporary, and ad hoc structures and arrangements (including, the PA itself) including fixtures that function as well or as poorly as prevailing political conditions permit.

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Despite their protests, the leadership of each PA faction shows every sign of doggedly digging itself in and making the current division permanent. The Ramallah PA acts as if no division had occurred, pretending that it can continue operating internally and negotiating internationally as it has since 1994. The Gaza PA busies

itself with welding governance structures firmly to the Hamas movement, creating a party–state that is uncannily similar to Fatah’s 1990s construction. Each side displays a determination to continue indefinitely, smugly convinced that its rival cannot do the same.

THE WEST BANK: A ROAD MAP TO A CUL-DE-SAC

Conditions in the West Bank have prompted giddy press coverage about security and prosperity.¹ Giving credit to Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, Thomas Friedman has even suggested that the perceived success is based on a new model and may augur a change in Arab politics: “Something quite new is happening here. And given the centrality of the Palestinian cause in Arab eyes, if Fayyadism works, maybe it could start a trend in this part of the world—one that would do the most to improve Arab human security—good, accountable government.”²

Is Fayyadism New?

Certainly, there are improvements in both the economy and in public order. But what is far less clear is the sustainability of these improvements, which in Palestinian eyes have come at a very high cost. Each step toward prosperity and security on the West Bank is predicated on widening divisions

between the two Authorities and, implicitly, on the unlikely hope that the Gaza-based PA will eventually simply wither away or surrender.

What has actually occurred on the West Bank? In June 2007, immediately after the split with Gaza, PA President Mahmoud Abbas appointed a technocratic cabinet headed by Salam Fayyad. A cabinet reshuffle in May 2009 introduced figures from Abbas's Fatah party. While Fayyad's cabinets have not been able to extend their authority outside of West Bank cities and towns, the resumption of Israeli revenue transfers (Israel collects a large portion of Palestinian tax revenues when goods destined for Palestinian markets pass through Israeli ports) and a massive international assistance effort has assured the fiscal health of the Ramallah-based PA since June 2007. In addition, the United States has increasingly pressured Israel to remove some obstacles to travel within the West Bank.

These steps have yielded predictable results: West Bank civil servants have been paid almost regularly, despite some unpaid arrears and delays in assistance delivery; debilitating restrictions on movement have been diminished; and the Ramallah PA security services have cracked down on Hamas and launched a law-and-order campaign on West Bank streets, which have earned Israeli praise and facilitated the partial relaxation of strangulating travel restrictions.

Competent and internationally respectable, Salam Fayyad has made a real contribution to these developments. Yet Friedman's description of Fayyadism as groundbreaking for the Arab world betrays a very selective reading of history. Fayyad's approach to governance is anchored in the belief that governance could be improved under continued occupation. He emphasizes a technocratic ministry dedicated to professionalization, competence, fiscal transparency, regularization of authority, cabinet government, streamlined and less partisan security services, and economic development. This approach is distilled from a Palestinian reform movement born shortly after the creation of the PA in the mid-1990s. The successes of that reform movement were extremely uneven, peaking in 2002 and 2003 with a package of fiscal, governance, and constitutional reforms that elevated Fayyad to finance minister and eventually created the post of prime minister.³ Fayyad's program is not new; it is merely attracting a level of international diplomatic support that was denied to earlier efforts. Prior reform was sometimes accompanied by funds and advice from international

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sources, but it rarely received the high-level support and diplomatic muscle it needed. This explains the efficacy of Fayyad’s program in comparison with past failures.

Reform Without Democracy

From the perspective of the earlier reform movement, one vital ingredient is missing in the current Fayyadism: democracy. The Ramallah PA is headed by an elected president, but its cabinet has no democratic credentials and its elected parliament has been effectively suspended. The courts show

..... some signs of resuming their functions and enjoy greater autonomy than in the past, but this hardly compensates for the lack of democracy. Moreover, police and security forces are tasked not only with enforcing traffic laws and intimidating local gangs (which

doubled as militias and protection rackets during the intifada), but also with imposing a widespread crackdown on Hamas throughout the West Bank.

The thorough campaign against Hamas in the West Bank has driven much of the movement in areas under Ramallah’s control into hibernation or underground activity. Hamas activists have been arrested, mosques and officially-sanctioned charities have been brought under strict control, pro-Hamas civil servants have lost their jobs, and NGOs associated with Hamas have been shut down. In the West Bank, the celebrated improvements in security are indelibly linked to a campaign of political repression that provokes howls of protest from opposition (and even many neutral) political actors. While Hamas is disliked by many Palestinians, most still support incorporating it as a legitimate political actor rather than an organization to be suppressed.

The result is undeniably authoritarian. Granted, this is a new kind of authoritarianism, at least for Palestinians. Under Yasser Arafat, the PA would often act in an arbitrary, corrupt, and unpredictable manner, steered by numerous cross-cutting pressures and by the contradictory impulses of its charismatic leader. Current developments in the West Bank are far more regular and predictable, even if more authoritarian.

From this authoritarianism there is no easy escape. Abbas has called for elections but has also issued a decree-law that effectively bars Hamas from participating. For its part, Hamas rejects elections before reconciliation.

Authoritarianism also aggravates the atrophy of Fatah. With competitive national elections unlikely, there is little incentive to close ranks and end factional infighting. Even in 2005 and 2006, when elections were imminent and the incentive for unity was high, Fatah leaders expended more effort outmaneuvering each other than seeking to defeat Hamas.

Where Does It All Lead?

The main problem with what Friedman calls Fayyadism—and what earlier pundits dubbed “West Bank First”—is not that it undermines democracy in the short term but that it masks the absence of any long-term strategy. Friedman’s paean to Fayyadism ends: “Hamas and Gaza can join later. Don’t wait for them. If we build it, they will come.” It is not clear that Ramallah’s planning goes beyond that Hollywood cliché. The hope that Hamas will simply come along, however, requires transforming temporary gains in the West Bank into sustainable economic and political achievement. More pointedly, it requires that Hamas accept defeat and join the march of Ramallah’s progress.

More troubling is the absence of a strategy to confront internal divisions. The current arrangements, especially on the security front, will continue to drive a wedge between the West Bank and Gaza. It is inconceivable that progress on the West Bank can be maintained, much less solidified, without continuing the harsh crackdown on Hamas. This has made the security program itself a bitter bone of contention: Hamas has made it clear that any reconciliation must include a fundamental reconfiguration of the current West Bank security program.

The undeniable effect of any long-term initiative becoming moot—such as the idea of restoring elections—would be to widen the gulf with Gaza, not to

overcome it. Thus, the greatest risk of “West Bank First” or “Fayyadism” is that it leads to a cul-de-sac. Every short-term step toward success may actually undermine any long-term effort to knit Palestine together.

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GAZA: IS HAMAS COPYING FATAH IN ALL THE WRONG WAYS?

While international observers pay at least episodic attention to internal developments in the West Bank, they almost completely ignore

internal developments in Gaza. There are occasional exceptions, such as the bloody fight between PA Gaza security forces and a radical salafist group in Rafah, and the horrifying economic collapse in Gaza. But perhaps most strikingly overlooked is Gaza's political development over the past two years, which has transformed the nature of Hamas as a movement.

When observers look inside Hamas, they search only for signs of ideological transformation and indications that Hamas would accept a

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two-state solution. Thus, they see only tantalizing—yet extremely ambiguous—hints of such a shift. However, on the organizational level, Hamas has changed unambiguously. Its leaders have taken a series of steps that Hamas claimed it would avoid, building a governance apparatus in Gaza that elides the distinction between party and government. Hamas has taken on some of the features that characterized Fatah in the 1990s; in this regard, Hamas's current leaders have come to resemble the people against whom the movement's founders warned.

Hamas: The Quicksand of Governing

Hamas never rejected political participation in principle, but entered the political field carefully and after a prolonged series of internal deliberations. When it won the parliamentary elections in January 2006, Hamas took steps to show it would not repeat Fatah's imperiousness and clumsiness. It strove unsuccessfully to assemble a national unity government, publicly eschewed many of the perquisites of political authority, and leaned toward technocratic expertise rather than political credentials in assigning some key cabinet positions. Hamas also claimed that it would avoid Fatah's mistake of melding itself to the PA. In Hamas's eyes, Fatah's blunders had not only corrupted it as a movement, but had corrupted the PA itself, turning the proto-state into an instrument of party patronage and brutal domination. Even worse, when Israel turned against the PA, in 2002, attacking PA institutions especially (but not exclusively) in the security sector, Fatah found itself so wedded to the PA that it disintegrated, torn between “resistance” and governance and unable to accomplish either goal effectively.

Hamas, by contrast, insisted that it would require high PA officials to resign their positions within the movement. That pledge was never fully

honored; key figures in the movement, such as Sa'id Siyam and Mahmud al-Zahhar, took high cabinet positions and the Ministry of Interior formed a Gaza security force that seemed to be a pro-Hamas counterweight to the Fatah commanded security forces. Additionally, while Hamas claimed that it could pursue "resistance" and politics simultaneously, its interest in governing has increasingly led it to favor a temporary *modus vivendi* with Israel (most recently in April 2010 persuading various Palestinian factions in Gaza to suspend operations against Israeli targets).

Hamas has also tried for a while to be far more faithful than Fatah to constitutional procedures and legal mechanisms. However, it proved unable to follow this formula for long. A series of obstacles—international boycott, fiscal strangulation, intermittent violence with Fatah, and crippling strikes by public employees—made governing difficult when it worked to govern in 2006 and 2007. For the most part, Hamas appeared during this period to hold its own fire against Israeli targets, but hardly did so in a way that inspired confidence or credulity in Israel, since the movement insisted that it had not abandoned resistance. More seriously, Hamas refused during its period in power to use its political authority to force other groups to cease attacks against Israel.

Faced with crisis on every front, Hamas's first impulse was to work again toward a national unity government. However, temporary successes were undermined by a variety of international and domestic interest groups. In June 2007, fighting between Hamas and Fatah in Gaza escalated, and certain Hamas leaders perceived a concerted effort to expel the group from all positions of political power. Without delay, Hamas seized power in Gaza and was ousted from the West Bank.

The Construction of a Party-State in Gaza

Hamas's decision to assume full control of Gaza proved to be even more fateful than its decision to enter the 2006 elections. Hamas has since tactically insinuated itself into all aspects of social, political, and economic life in Gaza.

First, Hamas has abandoned most pretenses of living within the PA's constitutional framework. It has appointed ministers who execute their duties without the requisite approval of the Legislative Council—the very violation over which the Gaza PA lambastes the Ramallah PA. When Israel released the speaker of the parliament (Aziz al-Dwayk, elected on the Hamas ticket) in the West Bank, Hamas was just as resistant as Fatah to his resumption of his post; if the full parliament reconvened, the awkward fact

was that Fatah had a working majority as long as Hamas deputies held by Israel were prevented from voting

Hamas has also taken sharp retaliatory actions against Fatah, most notably by preventing most Fatah party delegates from attending congressional sessions. It has sought to sway NGOs by flooding them with new pro-Hamas members, tried to stack student council elections, and barred hostile newspapers.

When Fatah pushed back, Hamas turned Ramallah's countermeasures into devices to solidify its control over the Gaza PA. When civil servants on the PA payroll went on strike, Hamas filled the gap with its own officials. When Gaza judges chose to continue following the authority of the Ramallah-based Supreme Judicial Council, Hamas created its own ad hoc judicial framework and hired its own judges. And when teachers went on strike, following the direction of their Ramallah-based union, Hamas responded with widespread dismissals and hired its own teachers. Even when the union called off the strike, only some teachers were allowed to return.

Hamas has abandoned some pretense of building a security apparatus separate from the movement. It is true that the security services remain to government and not movement control. But the original seizure of power in Gaza in 2007 was more the work of the movement's militia than its security forces, belying Hamas's claim that the war was between the legitimate PA and Fatah. In the Rafah clash in January between Gaza PA security services and salafist-jihadists, Hamas's military wing again entered the fray in support of Hamas's party-state. Beyond the salafist-jihadists, Hamas is attempting to force all of Gaza's recalcitrant groups to accept the quiet status quo with Israel.

In these respects, Hamas's actions echo those of Fatah when it originally built the PA in the 1990s. The resemblance extends even to the economic realm. A decade ago, the economic arrangements of the Oslo Accords had led to a system of PA monopolies and border crossings dominated by a group of top officials. The tight restrictions imposed by Israel and Egypt on Gaza have led to an oddly similar result: what goes in and out of Gaza can be monitored, licensed, controlled, and taxed by Hamas and the Gaza PA. Officials have used this system to construct a fiscally sound administration in the midst of terrible economic devastation and an international boycott. At an Islamic University graduation ceremony, Gaza PA Prime Minister Isma'il Haniyya announced that all graduates with degrees in law and *shari'a* would have jobs waiting for them in the government. Gaza may be in a state of advanced economic decay, but Hamas is hiring.

The eerie resemblance between the Hamas of 2010 and the Fatah of 1994 also extends to rhetoric. After the movement's violent showdown with the salafist–jihadi group in Rafah, Hamas officials began to sound remarkably like Fatah officials did fifteen years earlier, after their violent clash with Hamas supporters in Gaza. In both instances, officials ordered that the legitimate security forces and the rule of law be accepted. Thus, Hamas followed Fatah in denouncing opponents for using weapons without official sanction, condemning dissidents for initiating the violence, and flinging dark allegations of external hands sparking violence.

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The resemblance in rhetoric persists. In March 2010, Hamas leader Mahmud al-Zahhar condemned those firing rockets on Israel as playing into Israel's hands. Fatah leaders had used the same argument against Hamas in the 1990s.

Limits to the Resemblance

By tightening its grip on the reins of governmental control, eliding the distinction between public authority and private organization, developing an economic system to sustain the party-state, and sanctioning an increasingly influential military wing, Hamas seems to be following Fatah's pattern of the 1990s.

Hamas, which prides itself as being the anti-Fatah in almost every respect, would reject accusations that it is becoming the reincarnation of its rival. Indeed, there are several critical differences between the two movements. First, although Hamas has managed Gaza's political economy to solidify its hold on power, its members are not yet implicated in the extent of personal graft and venality that characterized Fatah during the Oslo years. Second, Hamas as a movement is still far more coherent than Fatah. Neither movement is free of divisions and rivalries, but Hamas is more capable of making decisions and compelling internal dissidents to accept final policy choices—unlike the case in Fatah, once the movement announces a position there is rarely an attempt to undermine or reverse it. Further, even while under siege and partly underground, Hamas has demonstrated an ability to abide by its internal procedures. Last year, for instance, the movement executed the kind of internal elections that Fatah steadily postponed until it was jolted by its 2006 repudiation. And Hamas, for all its recent hints of diplomatic overture, maintains that it will never recognize Israel.⁴

Finally, Hamas differs from Fatah in the continued viability of its external leadership. While Fatah leaders who chose to remain outside of Palestine were pushed to the movement's edge, Hamas's political bureau in Damascus plays a leading role in diplomacy and decision making. The head of its political bureau, Khalid Mish'al, may have even earned a promotion. With the incipient elevation of Hamas to full membership in the Muslim Brotherhood, Mish'al will become the *muraqib 'amm* (general supervisor) of Hamas.

Waiting for History

Hamas's effective entrenchment in Gaza has obscured its long-term goal to liberate Palestine. Even though movement leaders insist that Hamas's horizons are hardly limited to Gaza, they are unable to publicly articulate any strategy for moving beyond their tiny party-state. In private conversations with movement insiders, I have heard no whisper of cohesive strategic thinking; strategy ends at an evocation of trust in God, an insistence on patience, and a sense that history is moving in Hamas's direction.

Viewed over the past twenty years, Hamas's self confidence is easy to understand: the movement has progressed enormously. What began as a small network of groups pushing Palestinian Islamists toward active and violent resistance to Israel now has deep roots and commands the attention of international decision makers. In the past, Hamas's leaders have improvised strategies to great success; they seem confident that there is no reason to become more purposive now.

WHAT DIVIDES PALESTINIANS?

Why is the gap between Fatah and Hamas so difficult to bridge? While Palestinians themselves often refer to the divide as pitting secular against religious forms of national identity, its roots are more complex.

From Fatah's perspective, the movement has never presented itself as totally secular. Indeed, all accounts of the movement's origins in the 1950s and 1960s highlight the significance of the Muslim Brotherhood. This happens to the extent that, according to one account, the Brotherhood itself hesitated when asked if Fatah was a part of the Brotherhood or if it was an independent movement.⁵ Of course, it quickly became clear that Fatah was independent, marked by its proclivity for direct action—a path then eschewed by Palestinian Brotherhood loyalists.

Over the years, Fatah has emphasized nationalist symbols and

attracted many followers who have little interest in religion or see limited relevance for their religious proclivities in the public realm. But the most ardent secularists have generally been attracted not to Fatah, but to leftist or other movements, such as the Popular Front, Fida, and the Communist Party. And Fatah's Islamist roots never completely disappeared. Yasser Arafat himself often peppered his speeches with religious references while other representatives of the supposedly secular movement frequently deployed religious symbolism.

Hamas follows a similar storyline. The movement is unquestionably Islamist—its full name, after all, is the Islamic Resistance Movement. But the distinction between nationalists and Islamists should not be overstated. Hamas was formed by Islamists who were frustrated by their camp's absence from the national struggle. The movement has never joined the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the umbrella organization for all Palestinian groups. However, Hamas's distance from the PLO is related to disputes over the scale of its representation rather than any principle-based objection to coordinating with other movements.

From its beginning—and on occasion even today—Hamas has cast its dispute with Israel in religious terms. But close observers note that the emphasis on religious over political argumentation has increased dramatically in recent years.⁶ In some ways, Hamas's roots in the Muslim Brotherhood actually accentuate this trend; while the Brotherhood is adamant that Islamic values should inform public life, it can be fairly pluralistic in its approach to Islamic doctrine and law.

Some leading Brotherhood thinkers have recently leaned toward a more general and expansive interpretations of the Islamic legal heritage.

For all its bitterness, the split in the PA since June 2007 has not necessarily widened the ideological gap between Fatah and Hamas. Indeed,

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both sides claim to constitute the legitimate leadership of the Palestinian national movement and have attempted to cast their ideological appeals in fairly broad terms.

Of course, there are undeniable ideological differences between Hamas and Fatah, particularly concerning the relative role of nation and religion in Palestinian identity. But the difference is not absolute. This is true not only at the leadership level but also at the grassroots level, where partisan proclivities have subtly shifted. Indeed, Loren Lybarger's penetrating analysis of the

evolution of Palestinian identity shows that the national and Islamist camps have as many overlapping as contradictory themes; movement between them is evolutionary and generational.⁷

DEBATING RELIGION AND NATION: A SHALLOW GAP TOO WIDE TO BE BRIDGED

The deepest divisions between Hamas and Fatah lie as much in political questions as religious ones. The gaps seem most severe on the two-state solution and the appropriateness of various forms of resistance. Even on these issues, however, there are many shades of gray and positional overlapping within each movement. But Palestine lacks the structures, the leaders, and the incentives to bridge the gap. For this reason, the width of the division may be more problematic than its depth.

The structural problem is that Fatah and Hamas do not fight in the genteel settings of seminar rooms or the established channels of constitutional democracy. Instead, their contest unfolds on the streets of Gaza and the West Bank, where both sides simply impose their will whenever they can. Although there are institutional mechanisms on paper by which groups can sort out their differences, such options have grown markedly weaker over the past three years. The constitutional framework—Palestinian basic law—is thoroughly broken. Legal instruments are now employed chiefly to serve partisan ends, and the conditions of imposed unity in Israeli prisons has produced no visible outcomes for quite some time.

PA leaders on both sides are profoundly suspicious of the other side and deeply invested in the current division. Individuals who might lead unity efforts often seem like yesterday's leaders. Nasir al-Sha'ir no longer serves as deputy prime minister; al-Dwayk is prevented from serving as speaker by Fatah and is marginalized by Hamas; Marwan al-Barghuti is imprisoned and distrusted by many Fatah leaders; and Abu Jihad was killed more than two decades ago.

Finally, and most disturbingly to those striving for Palestinian unity, is how international forces structure incentives that perpetuate the division. Periodic international negotiation efforts seem both anemic and increasingly monopolized by an Egyptian regime whose interest in Palestinian unity is at best uncertain. Demands from the external funders of the Ramallah government—chiefly, but not exclusively, the United States—that reconciliation include full renunciation of violence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of past agreements move Palestine even further from unity.

Palestinians argue, sometimes quite bitterly, about God and homeland. But ultimately, disputes about power and money cement those divisions and make unity, and even boundaries on competition, difficult to achieve.

PROSPECTS FOR DIGGING OUT RATHER THAN DIGGING IN

With Fatah and Hamas each cockily confident that history is on its side, any possibility for coherent and unified Palestinian action is becoming more remote.

Passports, banks, and the electricity bill link Gaza and Ramallah, but they represent bones of contention and instruments of control rather than opportunities for cooperation. Only over school curriculum and the *tawjihi* (the high school matriculation exam) is there close coordination between the two Authorities.⁸ For Palestinian schoolchildren, and especially anxious high school seniors, Palestine is united. But other Palestinians answer to different authorities, read different newspapers, are paid from different accounts, and are increasingly subject to different laws, depending on which half of the PA is dominant where they live.

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This widening division is not only the default option for both Authorities. It is also U.S. policy, although as much by inertia as design. Having dug itself into a position of harsh sanctions against Hamas and robust support for the Ramallah PA, Washington now sees no alternative. Former President George W. Bush launched this policy, but President Obama has continued it. The new U.S. administration has a slightly gentler touch, quietly pressuring Israel to ease up on Gaza and expressing interest in supporting Ramallah in ways that transcend bolstering security forces. If inertia fails, the United States may be forced to re-learn its lesson from Iraq in the 1990s. Martin Indyk’s critique of Iraq policy could easily describe U.S. policy towards Palestine since 2006, with the substitution of Hamas for Saddam Hussein and of the Quartet for the United Nations:

Sanctions also proved to be a blunt weapon in the American diplomatic arsenal against Saddam, doing immense damage to Iraqi society. Yet, ironically, they have become the new lever of choice when the United States attempts to alter the policy of a rogue regime...

The Iraq experience shows that sanctions tend to affect the citizens of the target country much more than the regime....

Once imposed, however, sanctions tend to take on a life of their own. In Washington a bureaucracy is created or expanded to police and monitor their enforcement. Regular reports must be made to the Congress, which will often impose additional sanctions and reporting requirements to assert its role and influence. A similar process takes place at the United Nations. Before long, a ratchet mechanism is in place that only allows for sanctions to be expanded as the current dosage fails to produce the desired change in behavior. Then it becomes impossible to determine the tipping point where sanctions become counterproductive and eventually ineffective.⁹

In the Iraqi case, however, Indyk does not hold that there was a better policy than the one pursued. He simply concludes, "Sometimes wise policy consists of waiting until something better turns up."¹⁰ If this is true for the current Palestinian issue, every domestic and international actor involved is blessed by wise leaders indeed. ■

ENDNOTES

- 1 See, for instance, Ethan Bronner, "Signs of Hope Emerge in the West Bank," *New York Times*, July 16, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/17/world/middleeast/17westbank.html?_r=3 (accessed March 31, 2010).
- 2 Thomas Friedman, "Green Shoots in Palestine," *New York Times*, August 4, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/05/opinion/05friedman.html?_r=2 (accessed March 31, 2010).
- 3 For more on this reform movement, See Nathan Brown, "Requiem for Palestinian Reform: Clear Lessons From a Troubled Record," Carnegie Paper 81, February 2007, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/cp_81_palestine_final.pdf (accessed March 31, 2010), and "Evaluating Palestinian Reform," Carnegie Paper 59, June 2005, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/CP59.brown.FINAL.pdf> (accessed March 31, 2010).
- 4 Fatah leaders have sometimes sought to coax Hamas into acquiescing to negotiations with Israel by pointing out that Fatah has not recognized Israel either. This argument stresses that the relevant agreements are between national, and not party, leaderships. It follows, so goes the argument, that Hamas should be able maintain its position as a movement and need only refrain from actively disrupting negotiations. Such statements are disingenuous and have failed to persuade Hamas. While Fatah did not formally recognize Israel in so many words, it accepted the 1967 borders as the basis of a peaceful settlement, a formula that cannot mean much other than recognition of Israel. (Hamas has accepted the idea of a state on the 1967 borders but has rejected that as the basis of a final settlement). Moreover, the bodies that Fatah has controlled and directed so closely—the PLO and the PA until 2006—recognized and negotiated with Israel.
- 5 Khalid Nimr Abu al-`Umrayn, *Hamas: Harakat al-Muqawima al-Islamiyya. Juzuruha-Nasha'ruha-Fikruha al-Siyasi* (Markaz al-Hadara al-`Arabiyya, 2001).

- 6 This comes out very clearly in various works by Khaled Hroub. Also of interest are Nasir al-Din al-Sha`ir, *ʿAmaliyyat al-Salam al-Filastiniyya-al-Israʿiliyya : Wijhat Nazar Islamiyya* (Nablus: Markaz al-Buhuth wa-l-Dirasat al-Filastiniyya, 1999); Jeroen Gunning, *Hamas in Politics: Democracy, Religion, Violence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); and Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).
- 7 Loren D. Lybarger, *Identity and Religion in Palestine: The Struggle between Islamism and Secularism in the Occupied Territories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).
- 8 Indeed, education officials described to me some odd deference in this field. When the tawjihi was first administered after the split, the rival ministers of education signed the certificate for his or her respective domain. But when important Arab countries declined to recognize the Gaza certificates, the Gaza PA is said to have accepted that the Ramallah minister would sign for Gaza.
- 9 Martin Indyk, *Innocent Abroad* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009), 212-213.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 214.



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